

city, offered to apply his own private revenues to the task, on condition that the edifice should be inscribed with his name, and not that of the Athenian people, they at once uttered their applause of his acts, and laughed at the charge. The money thus expended has returned ample interest even in a pecuniary point of view; it has proved an investment on which their descendants are subsisting. Travellers from all parts of the world still visit the wonderful remains of these buildings, to study the effect they produce, and to enjoy the associations they induce; and so contribute materially to the support of the modern inhabitants.

I must say a word or two about the Parthenon, the finest example of Doric art, before we pass to the Ionic and the Corinthian; but the chimneys of the old church, which seem to follow each other faster and faster, remind me of other duties less pleasant than addressing you, and force me to defer for a time any further observations.

Believe me always yours,

Beggs.

THE ROUND CHURCH AT NORTH-AMPTON.

At the meeting of the Northamptonshire Architectural Society, held last week, Mr. Scott read a paper with reference to the proposed restoration of St. Sepulchre's, Northampton, which he commenced thus:—

Round and octagonal churches appear, in the first instance, to have been built not so much for congregational uses as to overshadow some single central object,—baptisteries, to inclose the great central font,—and other churches of this form, to inclose some sacred tomb or shrine. It is a remarkable circumstance, that at Jerusalem two such edifices exist; both very much alike in plan and construction; both overshadowing a mass of rock; and in both that mass of rock containing a sacred cave. One of these buildings is commonly called the Mosque of Omar, or, more correctly, "The Dome of the Rock." The rock it contains appears, from pretty good evidence, to be that in which the brazen altar in the ancient temple was erected; while the cave within it was a cesspool formed to receive the blood of the sacrifices. This rock was, for some centuries after the destruction of the temple, held sacred by the Jews, who made annual pilgrimages to anoint it with oil. The Christians, at a later period, to annoy the Jews, had covered it by a dunghill; but when the city was taken by the Mahometans, it was searched out and cleansed by them, and became one of their most sacred sites. Omar erected, probably, only a small building to protect it; but one of his successors, some fifty years later, erected over it the present magnificent circular (or partially octagonal) temple, called the "Dome of the Rock." The other circular edifice is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. When the Sepulchre was first recovered by Constantine, he erected over it a small ornamental building. This, with the neighbouring Church of the Martyrdom, was destroyed about A.D. 600, or a little later, by the Persians; after which Modestus, the coadjutor of the Patriarch, erected over the tomb a magnificent circular church, which probably suggested to the Mahometans, who almost immediately afterwards took the city, the idea for the similar erection over their sacred cave. This church was, in its turn, destroyed about the year 1000, and shortly afterwards rebuilt on a plan nearly resembling the former one; shortly after which the city again came into the hands of the Christians, who enlarged the church to such an extent as to make it include the site of Calvary and other sacred spots. It was just about this time that our own Early Round Churches were erected; being humble imitations, on a very reduced scale, of the building justly held so sacred by the Crusaders. The fact of their being built so soon after the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself was re-erected, and while the city was in the hands of the Crusaders, adds much to their interest. Mr. Scott then gave a general outline of the form

of the Church; and in the course of further observations said,—

The great question is now, what is best to be done? And this question resolves itself again into two, the one bearing upon restoration, the other upon enlargement. To begin with the Round. The primary question is, whether or not we are to aim at bringing it back to its ancient form? I see no difficulty about its external wall: we have evidence enough here to restore with absolute certainty. We may also be able to restore the groining shafts with certainty, though as yet I am not quite decided as to their design, the one which remains presenting some puzzling difficulties. Were these satisfactorily restored, the groining might follow, though with less certainty as to its original design, particularly as regards the section of its transverse ribs, and the manner in which it would rest upon the pillars. Before this could be done, however, the form of the original Round would have to be regained, both at the east and west, involving very extensive alterations, including the closing of the tower arch, and those leading into the chancel aisles. When we reach the arcade, with the triforium arches and clerestory, however, we should be left wholly to conjecture: not a trace of their original design remains. If their present form dates from the erection of the tower, it is probable that its massive walls have swallowed up all the materials which could give a clue to the restoration; though if the old form of these parts was preserved to a later date, we might hope, on removing the present clerestory, &c. to find at least some remains to aid in restoring the design. Still, however, the restoration could not be viewed as other than conjectural, and it becomes a question whether the interest lost by such a restoration would not be more than equivalent to the beauty gained. I confess myself much perplexed by the whole question.

The Rev. G. A. Poole afterwards read a paper on the same subject, from which we make the following extracts:—

We often hear at our meetings of the interest which attaches to the study of a church with reference to its history and its original character. I will now illustrate this interest from the church before us, confining myself, however, to the Round, the only portion which is attributed to Simon de S. Liz. You are all aware that in the interior we have a circle of eight cylindrical columns, supporting pointed arches. The columns are decidedly Norman, and the arches, though pointed, are so exceedingly simple, being only of one order, with a flat soffit, that if it were possible to conceive that any Norman arches could be pointed, we might certainly suppose that these were of the same date with the columns. Yet it was *a priori* very unlikely that if this church was really of the date assigned it, it would have had pointed arches. In consequence, it has given rise to various opinions. Mr. Parker, of Oxford, the compiler of the "Glossary of Architecture," declared it an example of pointed arches of a pure Norman period, accounted for by the foreign influence which might, under these circumstances, be fairly expected. Mr. Sharpe, the author of "the Parallels," had included this among examples of the transition period, which commences, according to his dates, about 1145. I had myself, in a work published some four years ago, attributed these arches to Simon de S. Liz, who died in 1127: but in my last paper on this church, I ventured, after a more careful survey, with express reference to the restoration, to state that the arches which had been so variously interpreted, were in fact so recent, as to be separated in their history from the columns, it might be 400 years or more. Since that, Mr. Scott has discovered, beyond all possible doubt, that not the arches only, but also part of the columns themselves, are recent, the capitals having been taken off and the shafts lengthened about two feet.

And now I turn to the question of restoration, and this I do with some little (I will not say diffidence, for I feel pretty confident of the justice of my conclusions, but with some little) trepidation, because I know that what I have already said upon the subject has been thought to savour of destructiveness by much better

judges than myself. Let me, however, premise this much concerning myself; that I am a most absolute Conservative in Ecclesiology, only with a little touch of something which, to follow out the figure, I will call Toryism, which intensifies, and, at the same time modifies, Conservatism; which elevates it from a profession to a passion, from a jumble of compromises and expedients, to a high and consistent principle. Nor, indeed, should I wish a better motto to my paper than the words of one of those right good old Tory songs, which make one tingle to one's finger's ends,—

"This is no my ain house,
I ken by the biggin o't."

And all this I say, lest I should be presumed to argue with the predilections and from the principles of a *destructive*; and that, now and always, what I may say may be interpreted in a conservative sense, if at least it possibly may be, and if not, then in a higher, and no lower sense. Not that, after all, my opinion has any greater weight than it shall derive from my arguments; for the Architectural Society, and the committee, to whom especially the restoration of the Round is intrusted, cannot be in the slightest degree committed by what I say. I wish this to be most distinctly understood. In the whole question I have no authority at all, direct or indirect, and the interest only of a devoted student of ecclesiastical art in one of its most valuable relics. All that I throw out is, at the best, for discussion.

One thing, too, I will premise, touching those who arrive at different conclusions from my own,—that no man, let his powers be ever so great, can be a fair judge, who does not come to see the church with his own eyes, and study it in its present condition, with especial reference to its restoration. I have shown that with less practically important objects it has been hitherto slightly studied, and that it has in consequence been generally supposed that the present pier arches are original, and that there was never any groining or triforium, and that though the present clerestory is obviously not Norman, yet that the original one was octagonal in form, and that the present is at least of such a date as to have some antiquarian interest. From these premises, every one of which is now proved to be false. I had myself, until I had made my last more careful review of the church, arrived at conclusions precisely opposite to those which I shall presently state. I cannot help believing that a similar course of study would produce a similar change in the opinions of others.

The first question before us is purely mechanical. Are the walls of the Round in a state in which they can be left with safety? and, if not, can they be restored to such a state without rebuilding? If the architect says yes to either of these questions, they will, of course, remain. If he says no to both of them, another question occurs. Shall they be rebuilt, or suffered to tumble down and remain in ruins? A question which would hardly occur to one of common sense, and which is therefore most worthily argued in the terms of one of uncommon genius. "Do not," says Mr. Ruskin, "let us talk of restoration. The thing is a lie from beginning to end. You may make a model of a building, as you may of a corpse, and your model may have the shell of the old walls within it, as your cast might have the skeleton, with what advantage I neither see nor care: but the old building is destroyed, and that more totally and mercilessly than if it had sunk into a heap of dust, or melted into a mass of clay: more has been gleaned out of desolated Nineveh than ever will be out of rebuilt Milan. But, it is said there may come a necessity for restoration! Granted. Look the necessity full in the face, and understand it on its own terms. It is a necessity for destruction. Accept it as such: pull the building down: throw its stones into neglected corners; or make ballast of them, or mortar, if you will; but do it honestly, and do not set up a *Lie* in their place. And look that necessity in the face before it comes, and you may prevent it. . . . Take proper care of your monuments, and you will not need to restore them. A few sheets of lead put in time